

Student Leslie Johnson shares communication experiences at the "Building A Peaceful Co-existence Between ASL and English on Campus" forum. Other panelists included (from left) English instructor Kathy Wood, Mathematics and Computer Science teaching assistant Patrick Atuonah, SBG President Jonathan Kovacs, and Social Work assistant professor Jaeiza Harmal.

## Forum topic is communication barriers

The time has come for fresh ideas about removing communication barriers at Gallaudet and helping people on campus become more comfortable with their second languages, whether American Sign Language or English.

This is the opinion of AnneMarie Baer, a coordinator of the first annual Fresh Air Forum, "Building A Peaceful Co-existence Between ASL and English on Campus," held in Ely Auditorium Nov. 10. "We need to look at different ways everyone at Gallaudet can use both ASL and English with more confidence and respect," said Baer, who is coordinator of the Deaf Alliance for Computers and Writing (ACW), a co-sponsor of the forum, and research technician in the Electronic Networks for Interaction laboratory.

The forum, also sponsored by Academic Affairs and the Student Body Government, featured a panel discussion by eight deaf and hearing faculty and students at Gallaudet with varied linguistic backgrounds. Some of the deaf panelists grew up using ASL at home or at school, while others were raised orally using English or, in the case of a deaf panelist from Nigeria, Ibo.

Panelists shared their experiences with communication and gave opinions on how people within the Gallaudet community can address communication difficulties. Deaf panelists shared stories of dealing with stereotypes linked to language—their hearing parents were told not to sign, or they have dealt with hearing people who think that having good ASL skills means having poor English skills.

But deaf people weren't the only ones to experience negative attitudes about their language abilities. A hearing panelist who had grown up in Harlem said she had been told by

one of her teachers that she would never acquire good language skills because she is black.

Panelists agreed that they learned most either from informal interaction, such as Deaf ACW's ASL-English Mentoring Pilot Project, or translating videotapes filmed in ASL to written English.

Most panelists felt that it was not possible for them to become fluent in their second languages, but all expressed the belief that they can improve their skills. "As a linguist," said panelist Kathy Wood, an English instructor, "'fluent' means different things—but I believe I can become highly skilled [in ASL]. Fluent, no."

Wood urged people to confront communication problems. She said her students prefer a variety of communication methods and often feel pressure from those using other methods to conform to their approach to communication.

Panelists were asked what should be done to improve interaction between ASL and English users. SBG President Jonathan Kovacs said he wanted to see three English classes offered—one for ASL users, one for those who sign in English word order, and one for those who prefer that teachers sign and voice simultaneously.

Sue Mather, a research scientist in the Culture and Communication Studies Program, observed that after KDES faculty were required to sign all the time, regardless of skill level, their sign language improved dramatically. She expressed the wish that people would sign more on campus.

"I think the forum has been a good start," said Baer. "We are beginning to see how people are trying to focus on coping strategies and solutions."

## Spanish deaf community researched

Dr. Susan Plann finds the situation of the Valley of Aran in Spain to be particularly interesting, especially to Spanish sign language users.

Until recently, cut off from Spain during much of the year by the Pyrenees Mountains on the border with France, some 3,000 of the valley's 5,000 inhabitants preserved their language, Aranese. "Even these 3,000 souls have the right to their language in Spain," said Plann. "And there are many more speakers of Spanish sign than there are speakers of Aranese."

Plann, who is the Powrie V. Doctor Chair of Deaf Studies through December, did not receive the chair to research Spanish sign language. But the subject keeps popping up as a key issue in her research on the history of deaf education in Spain, and she was awarded the chair so she could complete her book on that subject. She expects to finish the book before she leaves next month.

The book traces deaf education in Spain back to the mid-1500s and has taken Plann to Spain numerous times for research. But the book centers mostly on the 1800s, when Spain established a national school for deaf children in Madrid and the city of Barcelona set up a school for deaf children. Both were unique because most schools in Europe at this time were run by monks and nuns.

"The fate of the schools closely mirrors the larger political situation," said Plann. "The teachers would be of whatever political persuasion was in. When the opposition came to power, they'd have to run. One teacher was even sentenced to death."

Buried in the midst of all the stories of political upheavals and about the hearing administrators and teachers, Plann found a brief reference to an accomplished deaf artist who taught at the

school for 30 years—Roberto Pradez. Further research has led her to believe that he is akin in Spain to Laurent Clerc in France and America in his contributions to deaf education. Pradez was the subject of a presentation by Plann on Nov. 17.

In the fall of 1992, Plann presented a paper on Pradez at what she calls a scaled-down version of The Deaf Way Conference and Festival of 1989 held in Barcelona by the association of deaf citizens there. Afterward, many people gathered around her asking, "Were there other deaf teachers?" "The answer is that we have to look around and see," said Plann. "It really is a labor of recovery and reconstruction of deaf history. My fondest dream would be that students here would become interested in this area, because there is so much research to be done and so few people doing it," and because the concept that deaf people are a linguistic minority is just beginning to take root in Spain.

Although Plann has deaf friends in Los Angeles, where she is a professor at the University of Southern California, and has taken ASL classes, she took an intensive ASL IV class when she arrived at Gallaudet last summer. She also is participating in the Electronic Networks for Interaction (ENFI) lab tutoring exchange.

She also has presented papers at The Deaf Way and the First International Conference on Deaf History in 1991. The Powrie Doctor Chair, she said, enabled her to present at the Second International Conference on Deaf History in Hamburg, Germany. In addition, being at Gallaudet has broadened her awareness of possible forums for her research. "It's been really exciting and stimulating to be here and to talk with colleagues that share similar interests," she said.

## Gallaudet supports history conference

Gallaudet was well represented at the Second International Conference on Deaf History, held last month in Hamburg, Germany, and sponsored by Deaf History International (DHI).

Three people from Gallaudet were elected to the organization's new Bureau: Archivist and Special Collections Librarian Ulf Hedberg, vice president; assistant professor of history Ausma Smits, secretary; and associate professor and chair of the Government Department Mary Malzkun, DHI newsletter editor. John Hay of Scotland, the new president, is also British Deaf Association president.

Gallaudet presenters included: Dr. Lois Bragg, associate professor of English, "Deafness and Muteness in the North European Middle Ages (8th-12th centuries)"; Jack Gannon, special assistant to the president for advocacy,

"The Deaf Community: Learning Who We Are"; Hedberg, "Archives"; Jennifer Nelson, English instructor, "Literary Appropriations of Deafness: Early Modern England to the Eighteenth Century"; history professors Dr. Barry Crouch, "Education and the Cultural World of the Deaf Community," Dr. Donna Ryan, "The Holocaust and the Deaf Community: Where Are We and Where Can We Go from Here?," Dr. John Schuchman, "Non-elitist Deaf History: Reuben Altizer, A Case Study," and Dr. John Van Cleve, "Teaching Deaf History at the University Level"; and Dr. Susan Plann, Powrie V. Doctor Chair of Deaf Studies, "On the Rights of Deaf Signers and Other Linguistic Minorities in Spain Today."

The next DHI conference will be held in Australia in 1996.



## Holiday favorite published in sign

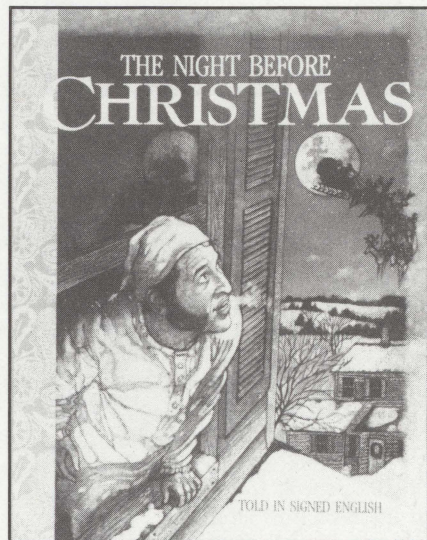
The age-old tale *The Night Before Christmas* is available in numerous versions, but Gallaudet University Press' release of *The Night Before Christmas Told in Signed English* is of particular note for families with deaf members.

But more than Signed English will draw people to the book, according to Press Marketing Director Dan Wallace. The book presents a "dazzling display

of reindeer, snow, sugarplums, and Santa Claus shown from a variety of unusual angles that could have been borrowed from a catalog of cinematic techniques created by Orson Welles, Steven Spielberg, or Martin Scorsese," he said. The presence of Santa in a variety of unusual perspectives—down the staircase and through the back of the fireplace, for example—give the verses fresh excitement, he said.

While the text is true to the traditional story, it includes a verse often left out of other editions, according to University Press Director Elaine Costello. The book also follows the story's traditional 19th century look in its color illustrations of the house and the family. "The difference is in the way we presented these elements," said Costello, "that and the addition of the Signed English illustrations."

The 64-page book was adapted from the Clement Moore story by Harry Bornstein and Karen Saulnier with illustrations by Steve Marchesi and Jan Skrobisz. It is part of the Press' Signed English Storybook Series and is available at \$14.95 from the Press and the Gallaudet Bookstore.



## Announcements

Russell Olson has resigned as executive director of the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), a position he held in the Division of Academic Support and Student Development (ASSD) since January 1993, according to a memo from ASSD Vice President Howard Busby. Beginning with the spring semester, Olson will return to teaching as associate professor in the Department of Government under Academic Affairs. Olson joined the University 25 years ago.

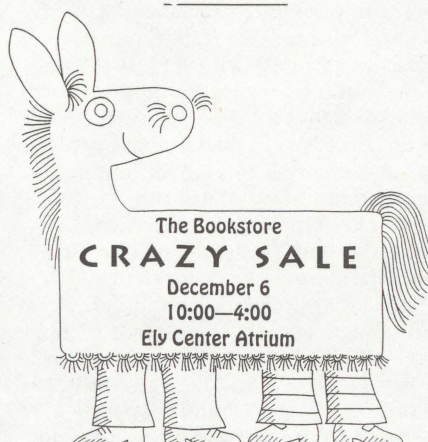
Gallaudet's Volunteer Program, a corps of about 60 volunteers working in 25 sites at the University, has moved from the National Information Center on Deafness to the Personnel Office, according to a letter from NICD Director

Loraine DiPietro. Betty Williams, an employment specialist with the Personnel Office who has worked at the University for 22 years, is now responsible for coordinating the Volunteer Program. Her office is in College Hall, Room 113, and her phone number is x5352.

The National Center on Accessibility is conducting a survey on the recreation behavior of people with disabilities. Volunteers are needed for several research projects. For more information, call (800) 424-1877.

"Look, Who's Laughing," a TV special featuring professional comedians with disabilities, will be aired on PBS Nov. 28. Comedians include Kathy Buckley, who is deaf.

Dr. Victor Galloway, chief of the Deafness and Communication Disorders Branch in the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Education, will talk about his experiences as an actor in the movie "The River Wild" at the Martin Luther King Memorial Library, 901 G Street NW, on Dec. 7 from noon to 1 p.m. The presentation is part of the library's celebration of Deaf Heritage Week Dec. 4-10. For more information, call (202) 727-2145 (TTY/V).



Dr. Richard Meisegeier of the Honors Program (second from right) talks with some of the 123 students who made the Dean's List last spring at a Nov. 9 dinner honoring their success.

## Among Ourselves

"Communication Deprivation and its Aftermath—Effects on Family and Relationships," a videotape prepared by the Gallaudet Counseling Center, was shown at the National Deafness Conference in Australia last spring. The video includes an overview of the history of communication issues in families with deaf and hard of hearing members, how the lack of effective communication affects the adjustment of college-aged deaf and hard of hearing students, and complications that visual impairment can present. For more information, contact Dr. Alan Marcus, x5260.

Dr. Michael Miller, professor, and Dr. Silverio Munoz, assistant professor, both of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, presented papers on Spanish-American literature at the 44th annual Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference Oct. 20-22 at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Dr. Barry Bergen, an assistant professor in the History Department, presented a paper, "Culture Transferred and Transformed: Moral Education in Early Third-Republic France," to the 16th Annual Meeting of the International Conference on the History of Education, held Aug. 10-14 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

A paper by Mike Wallace, director of Student Life for the Northwest Campus, was selected as one of four runners-up in 1994 Best Ideas in Student Services, a contest sponsored by *National On-Campus Report*, a national newsletter in the field of education. Wallace's paper was on the topic of academic integration into the after-school program. In this successful program now in place at the Northwest Campus, Student Life works closely with faculty to provide students with workshops and other programs that support subjects taught during the day.

## MSSD class helps to brighten season

Families in need of a helping hand will get one this holiday season, if MSSD's seventh-period leadership class gets its way. The class is working to raise \$800 to help fund two annual projects: Project Harvest and Project Santa.

Since Nov. 8, the students have been collecting donations of food and money for the projects. Project Harvest, which ends this week, is a charitable organization based in Washington, D.C., that provides a full, traditional Thanksgiving dinner and enough food for breakfast the next day to families who otherwise would go without.

However, faculty, staff, and students still have time to contribute to Project Santa, which is trying to provide holiday gifts to MSSD students whose families are living on incomes that are below the poverty line. According to a letter written by the leadership class, some students may be homeless, in the custody of the court, or their families may be ineligible for government assistance because of their immigration status.

Donations may be made in cash or by check to "MSSD/Project Santa" until Dec. 9. They can be brought to MSSD's seventh-period leadership class students or to Beth Betman, social worker, Counseling and Development, MSSD, Room 206. All contributions are tax deductible.

## Classified Ads

**Classified ads** are printed for Gallaudet faculty and staff. Written ads must be submitted in person or by mail to *On the Green*, MSSD, Room G-37. Off-campus phone numbers must include an area code and whether the number is voice or TTY. In compliance with the Education of the Deaf Act of 1992, as amended, payment of \$1 per ad per printing must accompany each ad. Ads received Nov. 21-23 will be printed Dec. 5.

**FOR RENT:** House in Cheverly, Md., near Metro, 3 acres, garage, 5 BRs, basement, greenhouse room, W/D, fireplace, porch and deck, \$1,295/mo. Call (301) 937-8660.

**FOR RENT:** 1- and 2-BR apts. and 1-BR accessible apts. in Washington, D.C., W/D, near Metro bus/shopping, rent incl. util. plus AC. For more information, call Deaf-REACH housing specialist, (202) 832-6681 (V/TTY) or Southview Apts., (202) 889-6660.

**FOR RENT:** Apt. in walking distance to Kendall Green, 2-BR, new carpet, fresh paint. Call Ms. Gaither, (301) 774-9719.

**FOR RENT:** Basement apt., kitchen, separate entrance, fireplace, cable TV, incl. util., Rt. 197 and Balt.-Wash. Parkway in Laurel, Md., \$550/mo. Call Olin or Audrey Miers, (301) 206-5276.

**FOR SALE:** Canon E40 8mm video camcorder, 3 years old, \$500. Call x5515, (301) 588-4282 eves., or E-mail RMSCHILLING.

**WANTED:** Baby jogger stroller. E-mail MMEIER.

**FOR SALE:** '79 Toyota Celica, exc. running cond., ready to drive, \$500. Call M. DeStefano (301) 881-0650, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.



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### Editor

Todd Byrd

### Editorial Staff

Lynne McConnell  
Andrea Shettle  
Jamie Berke

### Photography Staff

Chun Louie  
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Thomas Corcoran



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